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ABSTRACT

This document describes "Teach for America," a program which recruits outstanding college students who may not otherwise have considered teaching, provides them with an intensive training program, and places them for 2 years of teaching in inner-city and rural school districts with persistent teacher shortages. The report addresses: (1) the organization (history, advisers and directors, and staff); (2) the need (the shortage of teachers in specific areas, the shortage of teachers who are of color, and an impending general teacher shortage); (3) the rationale (capitalizing on student idealism and indecision, and countering the major factors discouraging students from entering teaching); (4) program overview; (5) recruitment and selection (recruitment at 100 top colleges and universities, and selection criteria); (6) training (faculty, site, curriculum, and key ideas); (7) placement (locations, certification, salaries); (8) support (within the school and external); (9) evaluation (of both program and participants); (10) the context of the program (including broader efforts to recruit teachers and broader efforts to professionalize teaching and restructure schools); (11) program contributors; and (12) reprints of mass media articles about the program. (DB)

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The National Association of State Directors of Special Education

# THE NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR PROFESSIONS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Council for Exceptional Children

INFORMATION BULLETIN #34

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## TEACH FOR AMERICA

National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education
Professions Information Center
The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 22091
703/264-9474

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*Teach for America is a new program designed to persuade college seniors (non-education majors) to sign up for a minimum of two years of teaching after graduation. In return, a deferment is offered on repaying student loans under the provisions of the Higher Education Act amendments of 1985.*

*Some 20 states have enacted alternative licensing programs that permit liberal arts graduates and others without education degrees to work as teachers. As a result, in districts with teacher shortages - the kinds of places Teach for America aims to reach - temporary teaching certificates are routinely provided.*

*This packet includes, among other things, information regarding Teach for America's recruitment procedure, the training of teachers, placement, support given, and a listing of colleges and universities which are recruitment targets.*

*For further information, contact:*

*Wendy Kopp*
*TEACH FOR AMERICA*
*P.O. Box 5114*
*New York, N.Y. 10185*
*212/974-2456*

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The total amount of Federal funds appropriated for the project is $236,959. One hundred percent of the total cost of the project is financed with Federal funds.

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## *We have a vision of an America where millions of the nation's best minds compete to enter the profession of teaching and the field of education.*

## *Our Immediate Objectives*

- *To recruit a group of outstanding individuals who may not have otherwise considered teaching*

- *To meet the needs of inner-city and rural school districts which have persistent teacher shortages, especially of people of color, bilingual and elementary teachers, and secondary teachers of math, science, and foreign languages*

- *To train, place, and support the corps members in such a way that their two years have a positive impact on the children they teach and on their own commitment to America's educational system*

## *Our Goals*

- *To revolutionize the way Americans view teaching, so that they see it as a challenging profession demanding the nation's best minds*

- *To create a corps of individuals who, whether they remain in education or move on to business or government or law, will spend their lives working to improve the educational system*

- *To make a significant contribution to teacher recruitment, training, and support*

# The Organization

## History

Last year, a student at Princeton University proposed in her senior thesis the creation of an organization that would use the Corps model – active recruitment, a short time commitment, a selective and centralized application process, an intensive training institute, and a placement and support mechanism – to attract individuals who would not otherwise consider teaching. Initial funding from a number of corporations made the creation of TEACH FOR AMERICA possible.

Today, a network of Campus Representatives at 100 colleges and universities is working to build a broad base of student support for TEACH FOR AMERICA. And a team of recent graduates from a number of colleges and universities has come together to raise funds, recruit corps members, construct a summer training Institute, and build a placement and support mechanism that will enable uncertified individuals to teach in areas of teacher shortage.

## Board of Advisers

The Board of Advisers, comprised of prominent business, government, and education leaders, provides valuable experience and guidance.

Joseph Alibrandi - Chairman & CEO, Whittaker Corporation
John Carter - President & CEO, The Equitable
David T. Kearns - Chairman & CEO, Xerox Corporation
James A. Kelly - President, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
Robert D. Kennedy - Chairman, President, & CEO, Union Carbide Corporation
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William E. Simon - Chairman, William E. Simon & Sons
James Thompson - Governor of the State of Illinois
Robert E. Wycoff - President & COO, ARCO

## Board of Directors

The Board is a group of individuals chosen for their experience in education, teaching, recruiting, promoting service among college students, and starting non-profits.

Matt Bardin - teacher, New York City; graduated from Princeton in 1987 and entered teaching through a non-traditional route similar to that TEACH FOR AMERICA proposes.
Rick Belding - executive director, Independent Educational Services; founder of Recruiting New Teachers.
Jim Clark - executive director and founder, ACCESS: Networking in the Public Interest.
Jennifer Eplett - one of the founders of City-Year, an urban Peace Corps in Boston.
Richard Graham - professor, George Washington University; first director of the federal teacher corps.
Wendy Kopp - founder, TEACH FOR AMERICA.
Andy Lipman - vice president, Amroc Investments.
Wayne Meisel - executive director, Bonner Foundation; founded Campus Outreach Opportunity League.
Susan Otterbourg - educational consultant; former teacher and principal; Coordinator, National Symposia on Partnerships in Education.
Laura Pires - program officer, Gould Foundation; involved in founding the College for Human Services and in many Community Schools projects.
Leslie Talbot - educational consultant; formerly with National Urban League.

## Staff

A group of recent college graduates is working to create TEACH FOR AMERICA.

Bruce Baker – Skidmore '89; published writer and musician; recipient of Fulbright Scholarship.
Richard Barth – Harvard '89; worked on business-education projects for the Committee for Economic Development and helped create and run CHANCE, a project to provide Boston students with tutors.
Lisa Bornstein – Harvard '89; founded and headed a student organization which promoted the discussion of psychological inquiry; taught junior high school students in summer program at Wellesley College.



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Sonja Brookins – Brown '89, Phi Beta Kappa; tutored and substitute taught in public schools.
Jose Calero – Williams '89; founder and coordinator of Latin American Organization; advised and tutored high school and college students.
Jamey Delaplane, Jr. – Harvard '89; tutored adult reading and writing and elementary ESL; research experience in public policy, specific work in the increasing political power of minority groups.
Joelle-Jude Fontaine – Berkeley '87; experience advising and counseling Berkeley students.
Michael Gilligan – Columbia '86; served in the Peace Corps as a rural infrastructure development agent; coached crew.
Paul Hagen – Stanford '87; taught math in Malawi, Africa, in the Peace Corps; organized physical education/nutrition program for elementary school children in economically depressed area.
Ian Huschle – Harvard '88; taught one year at the American School of Tangier ; launched a private venture in foreign trade; board of directors of Phillips Brooks House, a social work corporation of over 1000 volunteers.
Matt Irvine – Columbia '89; tutored and taught inner-city students in San Francisco and New York.
Guilaine Jean-Pierre – Williams '89; co-founder & associate editor of Williams Journal of African-American Studies.
Alli Jernow – Harvard '89; taught English to students and professors at Nanjing University; provided tutoring, job advocacy, and health care at the largest homeless shelter in Boston.
Wendy Kopp – Princeton '89; ran a student corporation with a staff of 60 and a budget of $1.5 million.
Wendy Lewis – Duke '88; developed customized promotional campaigns for international corporation; tutored mentally handicapped students in English and mathematics.
Daniel Oscar – Princeton '88; just returned from a year of teaching in China; tutored, taught and advised at the college and secondary levels.
Sonnet Retman – Princeton '89; tutored elementary school children; researched area of urban cultures.
Susan Short – Stanford '86; just returned from teaching in Lesotho with the Peace Corps.
Doug Shullman – Williams '89; founded, financed & managed 100-employee branch of national corporation; ski instructor, soccer coach, and backpacking leader.
Edith Silver – Columbia '89; co-directed a camp for children from a woman's shelter; worked in fundraising and strategic planning for non-profit groups.
Kimberly Smith – Columbia '89; experience evaluating business-education partnerships.
Whitney Tilson – Harvard '89; owned a 40-person painting company and served on the Board of Directors of the $2 million Harvard Student Agencies.

# The Need

The problems in the educational system are well publicized. We have heard that 700,000 students drop out each year; that students in the United States consistently score below those of almost all other industrialized nations in math and science; that more than 75 percent of 17-year-olds are unable to write an adequate analytic essay; and that the United States has an illiteracy rate of 30 percent while those of our competitors in Europe and Asia are around 10 percent.

TEACH FOR AMERICA's premise is that the future of the schools depends in large part on two factors: (1) the creativity, intellect, and drive of those who staff the schools; and (2) the extent to which the nation's leaders have experience in and a commitment to the schools.

TEACH FOR AMERICA, which addresses both of those demands, is thus a critical element of the movement to reform and restructure our public schools. It will also address some immediate, concrete needs:

## The Shortage of Teachers in Inner-City and Rural Areas

In some areas, teacher shortages persist even in times of general teacher surplus and even as the teaching profession in general increases in appeal, for they are functions of factors that may never go away – dangerous working conditions, poor location, lack of community and parental support, lack of resources, and so on.

## The Shortage of Teachers in Math, Science, and Foreign Languages

Even large, suburban schools have problems attracting teachers in science, math, bilingual education, foreign languages, and special education. For example, 72 percent of high school principals reported in 1986 a difficulty in hiring fully qualified applicants for teaching vacancies in physics; 62 percent, computer science; 57 percent, mathematics; and 52 percent, foreign languages.

## The Shortage of Teachers Who Are Of Color

Even as an increasing percentage of elementary and secondary school students are African-American and Latino, the teaching profession attracts a small and decreasing percentage of black and hispanic teachers. While people of color will make up 33 percent of the school-age population by the year 2000, it is projected that they will make up only 5 percent of this nation's teaching force. This shortage deprives students of color of role models and deprives all children of the opportunity to learn from individuals who reflect the ethnic diversity of this nation.

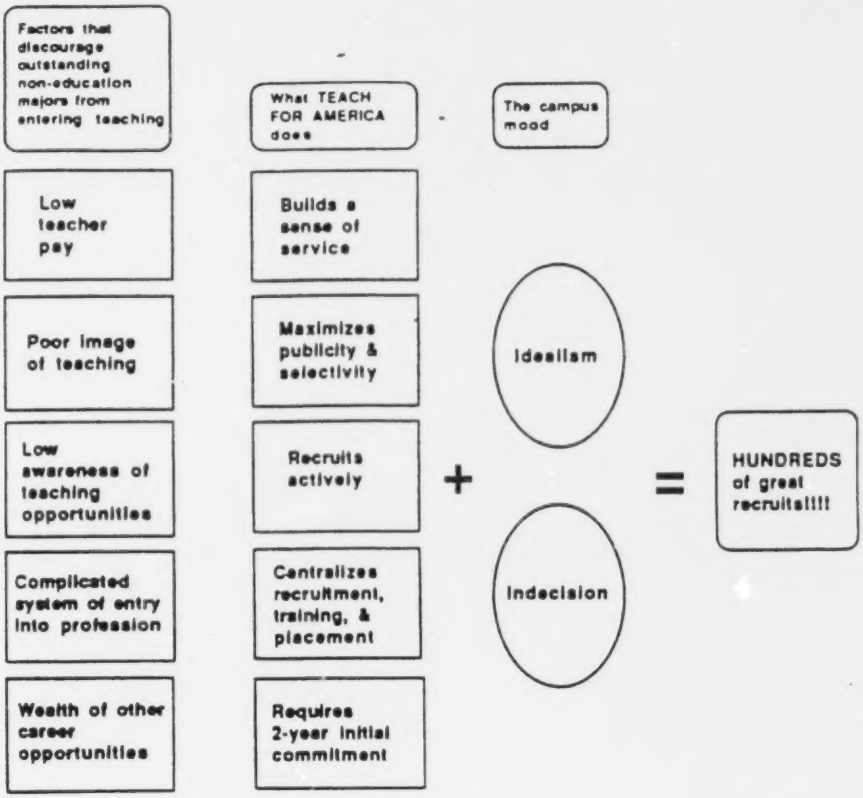
## An Impending Teacher Shortage of Unprecedented Proportions

Virtually all accounts project that the demand for teachers will increase dramatically in the coming years. The National Center for Education Statistics predicts that total yearly demand for new teachers will increase 35 percent by 1995. It projects that schools will have to hire 1.5 million new teachers between 1988 and 1997.

The increase in demand results primarily from a simultaneous increase in school enrollments and teacher retirements. As children of the baby boom parents enter the school system, enrollment will increase by 4 million, or nine percent, by 1997. And the National Education Association reports that because the teacher population has greyed significantly over the past two decades, as many as 900,000 of the nation's 2.3 million teachers will retire by the turn of the century.

# The Rationale

TEACH FOR AMERICA counters the five major factors that currently discourage the most outstanding graduates, in particular people of color and those who have majored in math and science, from entering the teaching profession. And it capitalizes on two campus sentiments – idealism and indecision – to attract talented individuals.

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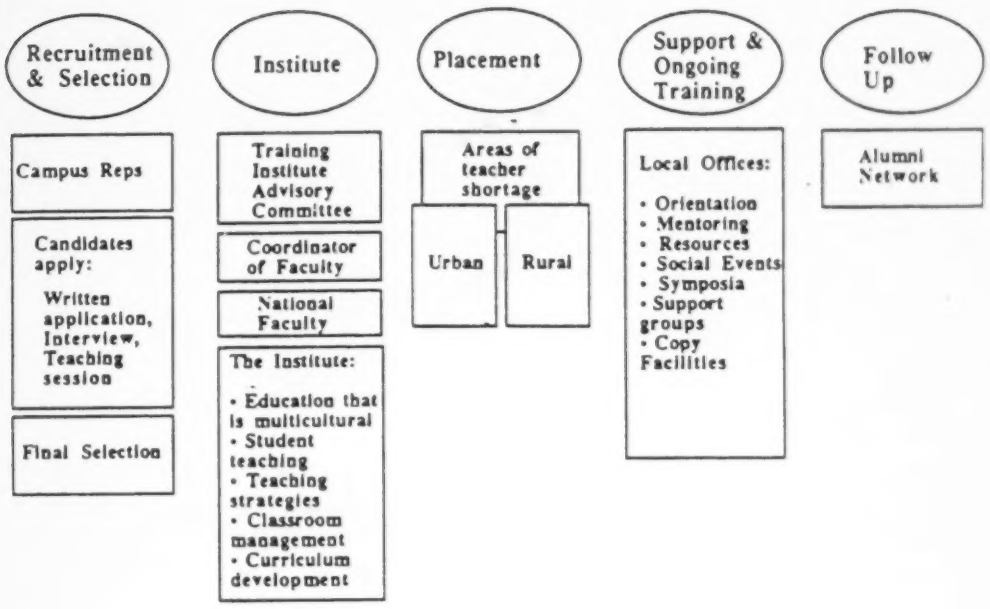
# Program Overview

The following display capsulizes the TEACH FOR AMERICA operations. Programmatic details are discussed further in the following pages.



# Recruitment & Selection

## Recruitment Targets

TEACH FOR AMERICA is recruiting actively at 100 of the nation's top colleges and universities, selected according to a variety of measures including size, selectivity, and minority enrollment.

| | |
|---|---|
| AL | Tuskegee University |
| CA | Claremont-McKenna |
| | Harvey Mudd College |
| | Pomona College |
| | Stanford University |
| | University of CA - Berkeley |
| | University of CA - L.A. |
| | University of CA - Santa Cruz |
| | University of CA - San Diego |
| | University of Southern California |
| CO | University of Colorado - Boulder |
| CT | Connecticut College |
| | Trinity College |
| | Wesleyan University |
| | Yale University |
| DC | Georgetown University |
| | Howard University |
| DE | University of Delaware |
| FL | University of Florida |
| | University of Miami |
| GA | Emory University |
| | Georgia Institute of Technology |
| | Morehouse College |
| | Spelman College |
| IA | University of Iowa |
| | Grinnell |
| IL | Northwestern University |
| | University of Chicago |
| | University of Illinois - Urbana |
| IN | University of Notre-Dame |
| LA | Tulane University |
| MA | Amherst College |
| | Boston University |
| | Brandeis University |
| | Harvard University |
| | Holy Cross |
| | University of Massachusetts |
| | Massachusetts Institute of Technology |
| | Mount Holyoke College |
| | Smith College |
| | Tufts University |
| | Wellesley College |
| | Williams College |
| | Worcester Polytechnic |
| MD | Johns Hopkins University |
| | University of Maryland |
| ME | Bates College |
| | Colby College |
| | Bowdoin College |
| VT | Middlebury College |
| MI | University of Michigan |
| MN | Carleton College |
| | Macalester |
| | University of Minnesota |
| MO | Washington University-St. Louis |
| NC | Davidson College |
| | Duke University |
| | University of North Carolina |
| | Wake Forest University |
| NH | Dartmouth College |
| NJ | Princeton University |
| | Rutgers University |
| NY | City College |
| | Colgate University |
| | Columbia University |
| | Cornell University |
| | Hamilton College |
| | New York University |
| | Rennselaer Polytechnic Inst. |
| | SUNY - Albany |
| | SUNY - Binghamton |
| | SUNY - Buffalo |
| | Syracuse University |
| | Vassar College |
| OH | Case Western University |
| | Miami University |
| | Oberlin College |
| OR | Reed College |
| PA | Bryn Mawr College |
| | Bucknell University |
| | Carnegie Mellon University |
| | Franklin & Marshall |
| | Haverford College |
| | Lafayette |
| | Lehigh |
| | Swarthmore College |
| | Penn State |
| | University of Pennsylvania |
| RI | Brown University |
| TN | Fisk University |
| | Vanderbilt University |
| TX | Rice University |
| | Trinity University |
| | University of Texas - Austin |
| | Texas A & M |
| VA | College of William & Mary |
| | University of Virginia |
| | Washington & Lee |
| WA | University of Washington |
| WI | University of Wisconsin-Madison |

## Campus Representatives

Seeking to build a broad base of student support for TEACH FOR AMERICA, we identified 100 student leaders ("Campus Representatives") who launched TEACH FOR AMERICA on each of the 100 colleges and universities.

The Campus Representatives came together December 1-3 at Princeton University and left ready to create TEACH FOR AMERICA chapters involving campus leaders from organizations representing different ethnic, academic, and extra-curricular interests. These chapters are planning and executing informational sessions and speeches, distribution of information and fliers, advertising, and the like.

On February 10, 1990, the Campus Representatives pulled off a simultaneous "TEACH FOR AMERICA Day" when each campus hosted the Class of 2001 (fifth-graders) from a local public school for a day of educational events. This symbolic event focused campus attention on teaching and education and TEACH FOR AMERICA.

## Selection Process

A three-stage selection process enables us to select a corps of the most outstanding, committed graduating seniors. A team of twelve trained recruiters travel from campus to campus to meet and evaluate all candidates on the basis of a written application, a standard-format interview, and a practice teaching session.

TEACH FOR AMERICA recruiters do not aim for a certain quantity of corps members but base their decisions solely on the strength of each individual candidate. The recruiters evaluate each candidate according to a number of criteria:

- persistence
- commitment
- integrity
- enthusiasm
- adaptability, creativity, and flexibility
- multicultural sensitivity
- independence and assertiveness
- ability to work within an organization
- conceptual ability and intellect
- oral communication skills
- written communication skills
- ability to operate without the approval of students
- possession of self-evaluative skills
- capacity for organization and preparation

The recruiters must determine the answer to the question, "Do you absolutely want this person to be a Charter Member of TEACH FOR AMERICA?" and then rate the candidate on the following scale: Exceptional, Outstanding, Great, Good, Fair, Poor, Terrible. TEACH FOR AMERICA accepts only those candidates who recruiters "absolutely" want in the corps and who rate as either exceptional, outstanding, or great. From the "accepted" pool, TEACH FOR AMERICA places those candidates who demonstrate the coursework and qualifications which districts specify as desirable.

## Commitment

Corps members will make an initial commitment of two years. They will agree to attend the expense-paid summer training Institute and to assume a teaching position in the assigned location, at the salary which a district would traditionally pay an individual with similar qualifications.

# Training

This intensive 15-hours-a-day, six-days-a-week Institute will serve only as the first important step for helping each corps member become a craftsperson in the teaching profession. Each member will leave the institute knowing that they are off to a terrific start toward becoming a dynamic teacher and, equally as important, they will leave knowing that they still have much to learn.

## Institute Advisory Committee

The Institute Advisory Committee met this past fall to draft a design and curriculum for the Institute. It included a number of thought leaders in teacher training, including Myrna Cooper of the United Federation of Teachers in New York; Carl Grant, a specialist in multicultural education and a professor at the University of Wisconsin; Pearl Kane, a professor at Columbia Teacher's College; Vito Perrone, director of Harvard's teacher education program; Marilyn Rauth of the American Federation of Teachers; and Jim Steffensen, who was active in the design and evaluation of the teacher corps Corps Member Training Institutes.

## Coordinator of Curriculum & Instruction

The coordinator is Carl Grant, chairman of the African-American Studies Department and professor of education at the University of Wisconsin. He was active in the design and executive of the Corps Member Training Institutes of the federal teacher corps.

## The Faculty

A national faculty of approximately fifty carefully selected outstanding educators (elementary, secondary, and university) will be responsible for instruction and professional development at the Institute. Each faculty member will have proven, in-depth knowledge and experience in a subject area or grade-level area. The faculty will include expert teachers of science, math, reading, language, and learning and motivational theory. It will also include expert teachers of multicultural education and home-school relations. All of the faculty members will have experiences in working in urban or rural educational settings. Some of the faculty members will be from locations at which the corps members will be placed after the Institute.

## The Site

The Institute will take place on the University of Southern California campus in Los Angeles from June 17 through August 11. The rich cultural environment and a year-round school system which provides extensive opportunities for student teaching make Los Angeles an ideal location for the Institute. All faculty and corps members will reside in one dormitory during the eight weeks.

## Institute Design and Structure

Corps members will be grouped into five houses. Each house will have approximately fifty elementary and fifty secondary corps members. Ten faculty members will be the "on call" instructional staff for each house.

Corps members will spend almost half of their time at the Institute student teaching under the guidance of Institute faculty. The remainder of their time will be spent in discussion groups and classes.

## Curriculum

The Institute will impart strategies in teaching, classroom management, and curriculum development and will seek also to acquaint corps members with current issues in education as well as the social context of the schools. Three overarching themes – professionalism, reflection, and multiculturalism – will run throughout the instruction. Following is a working grid of the curriculum design.

| COMPONENTS OF THE INSTITUTE | IDEAS TO EMPHASIZE THROUGHOUT THE CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Professionalism**<br>o Source of responsibility<br>o Collegiality<br>o Changing roles of teachers<br>o Complexityof teaching | **Reflection**<br>o Problem solving<br>o Faculty models strategies | **Multiculturalism**<br>o Experiences for the participants<br>o Context and approach for use in their own classroom and school |
| **I. Teacher as manager**<br>o Classroom and group management<br>o Discipline<br>o Developmental psych | | | |
| **II. Teacher as leader of active learning**<br>o Brief overview of educational philosophies<br>o Teaching strategies<br>o Learning theory/how students learn<br>o The exceptional child | | | |
| **III. Teacher as curriculum leader**<br>o Curriculum and planning<br>o Content area<br>o Assessment<br>o Innovation<br>o Utilizing resources<br>o Different approaches for reading & writing across the curriculum | | | |
| **IV. Teacher in social context**<br>o Education that is multicultural<br>o Reality of social issues impacting the classroom<br>o Specific cultures of the district | | | |
| **V. Teacher within organizations**<br>o School as social organization<br>o District structures and roles<br>o Community/parent involvement | | | |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# Placement

## Locations

TEACH FOR AMERICA will cluster corps members in major urban centers and rural areas across the United States. Districts applied to be chosen as one of the placement sites. In choosing among them, the organization has two major goals: (1) to mitigate teacher shortages; and (2) to provide corps members with an experience that will encourage them to remain active in the field of education.

At this point it is likely that TEACH FOR AMERICA will place in the following areas:

- New York City
- Chicago
- Los Angeles
- New Orleans & Baton Rouge
- rural North Carolina
- rural Georgia

## Certification

While the Institute will result in some credits toward teacher certification, it will not be sufficient to enable corps members to meet standard certification requirements. Therefore, TEACH FOR AMERICA members will teach under "waivers" or alternative certification programs that are now available to school districts which experience shortages.

## Salaries

School districts will pay the corps members as they would any full teacher with similar experience and qualifications. Salaries range between $17,000 and $29,000.

# Support

## Within the School

Each corps member will have the internal support of the school principal and of a mentor teacher, both of whom will be available to provide information and advice.

## External

Local TEACH FOR AMERICA offices will coordinate a support system that will involve:

- an orientation weekend/week
- an orientation for mentors
- ongoing training through ties with local universities
- a link with a retired teachers network
- small support groups
- communication with TEACH FOR AMERICA schools
- community links
- a housing/banking/health/living hotline
- local newsletter
- clearinghouse of educational resources
- copy facilities
- social events
- personal check-ins with TEACH FOR AMERICA teachers

## Follow-Up

TEACH FOR AMERICA corps groups will remain powerful and influential groups even after their two years in service. Whether the corps members continue in teaching or go on to business or government or law or medicine, they will have avenues and opportunities through which to help improve the American educational system. A strong alumni network, with reunions and conferences and newsletters, will ensure that the TEACH FOR AMERICA spirit never dies.

# Evaluation

TEACH FOR AMERICA 's first evaluation will begin with the training Institute and will then follow the corps members through their two-year experience. Its purposes are twofold:

(1) To provide an internal guide for program development; and

(2) To say something to the outside world about the desirability of the TEACH FOR AMERICA recruitment, training, and support models.

Among other things, the evaluation will demonstrate

- how TEACH FOR AMERICA corps members compare with the average new teacher population in terms of grades, interests, perspective, NTE scores, etc.
- how the TEACH FOR AMERICA Institute affected the corps members' perspective and knowledge base, and what the corps members thought of it
- how the TEACH FOR AMERICA support system affected the corps members' experience, and what the corps members thought of it
- how the TEACH FOR AMERICA corps members' overall experience compares with that of the average new traditionally certified teacher
- how principals and mentor teachers evaluate the effectiveness of TEACH FOR AMERICA corps members, using traditionally certified new teachers as a reference point

# TEACH FOR AMERICA In Context

So much is happening today in the areas of teacher recruitment, education reform and teacher professionalization that there exists a legitimate fear that new efforts will duplicate or, worse, run counter to existing movements. Yet TEACH FOR AMERICA is a unique effort to improve the quality and quantity of the teaching force. It will complement current efforts to attract teachers and to professionalize teaching and restructure the educational system.

## Efforts to Recruit Teachers

States, localities, the federal government, and the private sector have taken a number of steps to attract more, better teachers.

Over thirty states have recently mandated minimum salaries, and others have instituted across-the-board pay raises. By 1988, 35 had offered scholarships or forgivable loans to students agreeing to teach after graduation. Over twenty states have implemented some form of alternative certification, which enables liberal arts graduates and mid-career professionals to enter teaching through a shortened version of pedagogical training. Yet these efforts do not appear to have the capacity to eliminate problems in teacher quality and quantity. Few believe it is possible to raise salaries to a level that would make teaching competitive with other professions. Studies of scholarship and loan forgiveness programs reveal that they do little to recruit those who would not have entered the teaching profession anyway. And analysts of alternate certification programs conclude that they do not demonstrate the capacity to solve persistent geographic shortages.

Recently, Senator Edward Kennedy has proposed the creation of a "teacher corps." Through his bill, local states and school districts would receive more money in order to provide recruitment and incentives for college students who commit to five years in teaching. If the Kennedy bill does pass, it will attract a different pool of individuals than TEACH FOR AMERICA will. TEACH FOR AMERICA targets a unique niche of individuals – those with the most other career opportunities – and seeks to attract them by creating a powerful sense of service, selectivity, and status. It will attract graduates who realize that they have an unlimited number of opportunities and are unwilling to commit to five years in *any* occupation.

The private sector is also making a number of efforts to help attract teachers. The National Executive Service Corps retrains retired executives to teach, and a number of companies are also sponsoring mid-career people to enter teaching. TEACH FOR AMERICA is similar to these efforts, but it will recruit from a different pool and will place them nationally.

Another significant private-sector effort, Recruiting New Teachers, uses public service announcements and an 800 number to focus positive attention on teaching and to provide interested individuals information about entering teaching. It also provides a list of respondents to institutions which hope to recruit teachers. The increased national interest in teaching with RNT has helped to generate will help TEACH FOR AMERICA attract a select group of individuals. Eventually, TEACH FOR AMERICA will probably tap into RNT's pool of respondents, offering them a centralized application, training, and placement mechanism.

## Efforts to Professionalize Teaching and Restructure Schools

Business, education, and government leaders are resolved that the time has come for real change in the educational system. They call for school restructuring, for teacher professionalization. TEACH FOR AMERICA will help them in their efforts.

First, it will further efforts toward professionalization by attracting bright individuals to teaching. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, meant to be a backbone of the effort to professionalize teaching, seeks to recognize and certify "expert" teachers. The Board will require that the teachers it certifies demonstrate mastery of a certain body of knowledge, but it will not require an education major. It relies on teaching's ability to attract some of the brightest, most motivated individuals in our society.

Second, TEACH FOR AMERICA will build a corps of leaders with the knowledge and commitment to argue for school improvement and teacher professionalization. Even if they leave teaching to pursue opportunities in business or government or law, they will be strong advocates for change in the educational system.

# Contributors

TEACH FOR AMERICA will be funded by a number of corporations and foundations. We are grateful to the many institutions and individuals who have supported the start-up phase of TEACH FOR AMERICA. They include:

## SPONSORS
## ($100,000)

*Chrysler Corporation*
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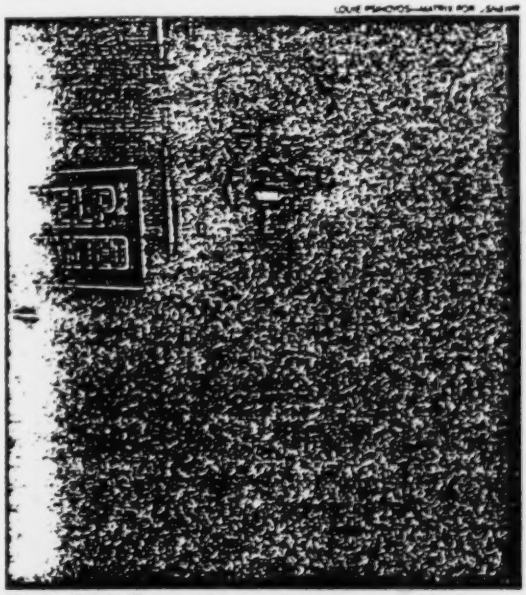
# Drafting the best and brightest

## EDUCATION ■ An elite new teacher corps reveals public spirit on campus

Well-tailored recruiters representing investment banks and professional schools are commonplace on the nation's elite college campuses. Students recruiting their classmates to teach in the nation's beleaguered public schools are not.

Yet that is what has been happening at 100 leading colleges and universities since early December under an ambitious new project called Teach for America. Astonishingly, this country's best and brightest, who traditionally have shunned teaching as a low-pay, low-status occupation, are responding. Indeed, within a week of slipping an informational flier under the doors of 1,500 university dorm rooms last month, Teach for America's Yale representative received 170 phone inquiries, reflecting a level of interest in teaching unimaginable on top campuses a decade ago.

Teach for America's founder is a 1989 Princeton graduate named Wendy Kopp. At a national conference of students in 1988, Kopp heard undergraduates with distinguished academic records express enthusiasm for teaching. That inspired her notion of a "teacher corps" that would allow graduates headed for other careers to sidestep state licensing laws that typically require teachers to earn education degrees. The 22-year-old public-policy major drew up a blueprint for the organization in her senior thesis last spring and established Teach for America after graduation.



**Wendy Kopp.** *Tapping into resurgent campus idealism*

**Coming shortfall.** Kopp's initiative is nothing if not timely. A severe shortage of talented teachers is threatening to undercut current attempts to improve the performance of the public schools. Reformers continue to bemoan the low caliber of many education-school graduates. And between now and 1997, rising enrollments combined with a wave of teacher retirements are expected to produce a need for 1.5 million new teachers—many more than the education schools are turning out.

Such statistics have sparked an intense interest in liberal-arts majors as a new source of teaching talent. About 20 states have created "alternative certification" routes into the nation's classrooms for would-be teachers lacking education degrees. The Bush administration has asked Congress to allocate $25 million for grants supporting the state programs. So far, such programs have attracted mainly scientists, lawyers and other professionals who want to make midcareer shifts into teaching. Teach for America is aiming to recruit seniors straight off the campuses of the nation's most prestigious colleges and universities.

Teach for America has a predecessor in the federal Teacher Corps, established in 1965 as part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, which followed a similar strategy in its early years, placing about 1,000 recruits annually in disadvantaged rural and urban communities. But Kopp uses as her model the Peace Corps, an independent agency with a high profile and an aura of selectivity and public spirit. "Part of the reason people apply to the Peace Corps is because they know it's selective," observes Kopp. "In order to attract people with the most career opportunities, we have to compete with graduate schools, investment banking and management consulting, which offer prestige and a high profile."

Teach for America's target schools range from the Ivy League to leading liberal-arts colleges and top public universities. The organization has made a priority of recruiting minority teachers and is recruiting at leading black institutions. Kopp and the organization's recruiters attribute the initial surge of enthusiasm on campus to student awareness of the crisis in education, as well as to a resurgence of public spirit among students generally. "Students are talking about teaching, science majors, premeds, the budding political types, the works—the enthusiasm is very broad," says the Yale rep, senior Jonathan Snyder. A 1989 survey of Columbia and Barnard seniors seems to substantiate that observation. Of the respondents, 60 percent expressed a willingness to teach in public schools for periods of two or three years.

**High-risk thinking.** Kopp's progress since submitting her thesis nine months ago has been extraordinary. She has raised nearly $500,000 from foundations and major corporations such as Mobil, Merck, Xerox and Union Carbide, and won many converts to her cause in the process. "It's the kind of radical high-risk, high-reward thinking that's needed to begin to turn around the crisis in public education," says Robin Hogen, vice president of the Merck Company Foundation, who calls Kopp "disarmingly effective" at opening doors in high places. Merck has donated $100,000 to Teach for America.

Working out of donated Manhattan office space with a staff of six recent college graduates, Kopp has recruited an advisory board that includes nationally prominent educators and several corporate titans. An equally distinguished panel is developing a summer training institute that all Teach for America recruits will attend prior to entering the classroom.

Negotiations to place Teach for America recruits are nearly complete with several urban school systems, including Los Angeles and Chicago, and with rural school systems in North Carolina and Mississippi. Later in the month, Kopp and her staff will travel to the campuses to select applicants who, in addition to undergoing traditional interviews, will be required to perform a 15-minute "teaching demonstration." Kopp is anticipating 7,500 applicants. Teach for America's first 500 recruits are scheduled to be named in April and to be in classrooms by September ■

by Thomas Toch

# About Education

Fred M. Hechinger

## Building tomorrow's public schools with the brightest college graduates of today.

THE NEW YORK TIMES **EDUCATION** WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1989

Early this year Wendy Kopp, then a student at Princeton, wrote her senior thesis on a plan to entice some of the best college graduates into teaching in public schools.

Her idea was a network of campus representatives who would persuade seniors at elite colleges to sign up for a minimum of two years of teaching after graduation. In return, those who joined would get a deferment on repaying students loans under the provisions of the Higher Education Act amendments of 1985. The goal, Miss Kopp says, was to recruit recent graduates, especially minority-group members, in math and science.

She first thought about this at a 1988 meeting of business and student leaders to discuss ways to improve the schools. "The idea just popped into my mind," she says. "I realized that top students might go into teaching if we could find a way to recruit them. It seemed so simple. One problem with the education reform movement is that people don't talk to college students.

"So many of my peers were completely undecided about what to do after college," said Miss Kopp, who had attended public schools in Dallas. "They seemed ready to be recruited by something like what I had in mind."

And so, Teach for America was born. One young woman's idea has blossomed into a private, not-for-profit program that will send its first group of college graduates to teach in inner-city classrooms in the fall of 1990. Tentatively selected are schools in Los Angeles, Washington, Chicago, New York City, the Rio Grande Valley in Texas and several cities in New Jersey.

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Some 20 states have enacted alternative licensing programs that permit liberal arts graduates and others without education degrees to work as teachers. In districts with teacher shortages, the kinds of places Teach for America aims to reach, temporary teaching certificates are routinely provided.

An eight-week summer training institute will introduce the new graduates to pedagogy, problems of cultural differences and teaching. A training advisory committee will create the curriculum for the institute and help select the faculty, which will include teachers and administrators from the cities already chosen. The committee includes a teaching specialist from Harvard, a member of the American Federation of Teachers, a New York City school principal and a staff member from Teachers College at Columbia University, among others.

Once the teacher is placed in a classroom, at the regular first-year salary, the school must provide an experienced mentor.

Would some of the graduates become professional teachers? "We hope that a good many will stay in teaching," said Miss Kopp, the organization's staff director and a member of its board. "But even if they leave teaching after a few years and go into law or business or medicine, they will be powerful spokespersons for public education and school reform."

Last weekend, 160 students from 100 campuses met in Princeton to get ready to act as recruiters.

Miss Kopp's advisory board includes chief executives from corporations like Xerox and Union Carbide and educational leaders like the school superintendent of San Diego and the president of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

She says she has received enthusiastic reactions from many educators, including Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, and Frank Newman, president of the Education Commission of the States.

Several corporations and foundations have made contributions, and $300,000 has been raised so far. Miss Kopp's budget calls for $1.7 million, including $1.3 for financing up to 500 recruits. Morgan Stanley is providing office space in the McGraw Hill Building in New York. Harold McGraw, the book company's chairman emeritus, is among the advisors.

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Teach for America is not the only effort to reach out for high-quality young teachers. The Peace Corps Fellows Program, for example, has joined with New York City's Board of Education and Columbia University to send returned Peace Corps Volunteers to schools in Harlem and the South Bronx.

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund plans to recruit minority-group members to teach in inner-city schools. And Congress is considering legislation to rebuild a federally financed Teacher Corps.

What distinguishes Teach for America is that it represents students speaking to students. Miss Kopp, a member of the Class of '89, is optimistic. She points to a survey of Barnard's and Columbia's class of 1989: 60 percent of 818 seniors who responded said they would consider teaching for two or three years.

This does not guarantee a rush of volunteers. Nor is it certain that even the brightest college graduates will necessarily be good teachers. But the plan fits into current efforts to reach out to new and different candidates for tomorrow's schools.



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April 1990

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# Elite-College Alumni Hatch Plan To Recruit Teachers

By Ann Bradley

A group of recent graduates of prestigious private universities plans to tap into college students' idealism and capitalize on their career indecision by recruiting candidates from 100 college campuses for teaching jobs.

As many as 500 prospective teachers will receive intensive training this summer at the University of Southern California before being hired by school districts experiencing teacher shortages.

The new program, called Teach For America, is the brainchild of Wendy Kopp, 22, a 1989 graduate of Princeton University.

Ms. Kopp modeled Teach For America after the federal Teacher Corps program, and wrote her senior thesis at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs on the topic.

"I hesitate to say it, because it sounds so lofty and superficial, but I really believe education is the key to everything," Ms. Kopp said. "There is an enormous amount of idealism on college campuses."

Ms. Kopp acknowledged that the program hopes to benefit from students' uncertainty about their futures. Its requirement that participants agree to teach for two years is designed to be attractive to graduates considering several career options.

Many bright students are interested in teaching, she added, but they either do not know how to go about doing so, or are put off by confusing certification requirements.

"By the time you get to be a senior, and you're looking for a job," she explained, "it's so hard to get into teaching compared to getting into investment banking or management consulting."

### Network of Recruiters

Teach For America's 100 campus recruiters, all volunteer college students, met last month at Princeton University to organize their campaign. Through informational sessions, posters, and letters, the recruiters will spread the word about the program.

In addition, they plan to sponsor a "Teach For America Day" on Feb. 10 in which local 5th graders will be invited to each of the 100 campuses for a day of educational events.

So far, Ms. Kopp said, the response to the program has been positive. For example, the Yale University campus recruiter received 200 responses within five days after mailing a letter to students describing Teach For America.

"Corps members" will be screened on the basis of applications that include essays and interviews with recruiters.

Those selected for the program will undergo an intensive training program from June 17 through Aug. 11 at the University of Southern California. They will serve as student-teachers in several year-round schools in Los Angeles.

Teach For America plans to sign contracts with a total of eight urban and rural school districts to hire corps members. The districts must agree to pair the new teachers with mentor teachers and to place them in schools with at least one other corps member.

> *"[I]t's so hard to get into teaching compared to getting into investment banking or management consulting."*
>
> —Wendy Kopp

The program's organizers acknowledge that teachers trained under the program will not have enough teacher-education courses to meet certification requirements in most states.

Instead, most will teach for the first year under "waivers" granted to districts with shortages of bilingual, math, science, foreign-language, and elementary-school teachers. And some may work in states with provisions for "alternate routes" to certification that allow teachers to become certified after beginning their jobs.

Although corps members will be required to teach for just two years, Ms. Kopp said she expects many will want to continue in the profession.

### Support Network Planned

A key component of the program is the extensive support that will be made available to corps members. In addition to the mentor teachers, local Teach For America offices will coordinate support groups, symposia, social events, and a newsletter, among other activities.

To date, Teach For America has raised $500,000 from corporations and foundations, including American Cyanamid Corporation, Apple Computer Inc., and the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation.

Ms. Kopp said she intends to raise $3 million to sustain the program.

"I think in part [potential donors] might be somewhat taken aback by the fact that I have just graduated and think that I'm going to create this program," she said. "I'm probably in a very good position to do that, because I know where college students are coming from."

The program's current staff members, who are assisted by a board of directors and board of advisers, include recent graduates of Brown, Stanford, Princeton, Columbia, and Harvard universities.

James A. Kelly, president of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and an adviser to Teach For America, said he believes Ms. Kopp has "identified an important piece of the puzzle of how to improve teaching."

"Her niche is to recruit into teaching a higher proportion of graduates from outstanding undergraduate liberal-arts programs," he noted. "I'm in favor of that goal."

More information on the program is available by writing: Teach For America, P.O. Box 5114, New York City, N.Y. 10185.

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